



**Testimony of Emma Hersom, Connecticut Public Interest Research Group (ConnPIRG)**

**in support of**

**S.B. No. 1057 (Raised) An Act Concerning the Secretary of the State and Early Voting. 4,**

**S.B. No. 1064 (Raised) An Act Concerning the Implementation of Early Voting**

**H.B. No. 5004 (Comm) An Act Implementing Early Voting.**

**Before the Committee on Government Administration & Elections**

**February 22, 2023**

Chairperson Flexer, Chairperson Blumenthal, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify here today in support of in support of S.B. No. 1057 (Raised) An Act Concerning the Secretary of the State and Early Voting. 4, S.B. No. 1064 (Raised) An Act Concerning the Implementation of Early Voting, and . H.B. No. 5004 (Comm) An Act Implementing Early Voting. My name is Emma Hersom and I am the chair of the ConnPIRG chapter at Trinity College.

Since 1972, ConnPIRG has worked to give students the skills and opportunity to practice effective citizenship. Both on campus and out in the world, we mobilize students to investigate big social problems, come up with practical solutions, convince the media and public to pay attention, and get decision-makers to act. A functioning democracy depends on the participation of its citizens. Every American – Democrat, Republican, or independent – has a fundamental right to have their vote counted. Step one to participation in elections is registering to vote. In an effort to expand participation, ConnPIRG historically runs voter registration drives at the University of Connecticut and other campuses where students express an interest.

On behalf of students who have little control over our own schedules, a single election day can be a real challenge to getting to the polls. Early voting, as adopted around the country, can dramatically increase youth voting rates.

We support all three bills in front of you today, while differing on the specific length of early voting – ranging from 10 to 18 days. Regardless of which vehicle you use, it is our feeling that a minimum of two weeks would provide sufficient flexibility to make it easier on the student population.

Thanks, in advance, for your attention to this matter.